



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

August 30, 2005

# News Release

## **SOUTH KOREAN NATIONAL WHO ILLEGALLY DIVERTED HELICOPTER ENGINES TO CHINA SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON** *Former South Korean Military Official Also Prosecuted Overseas In Connection With Case*

NEW HAVEN, CONN. -- Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that KWONHWAN PARK, also known as HOWARD PARK, age 36 and a citizen of South Korea, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Mark R. Kravitz in New Haven to 32 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release. On November 9, 2004, PARK pleaded guilty to violating the Arms Export Control Act, and conspiracy charges, in connection with his effort to obtain military engines for the Black Hawk helicopter manufactured by Sikorsky Aircraft, as well as other military items, and divert them to China. After completing his term of imprisonment, PARK is subject to deportation to South Korea.

Under U.S. law, any individual or entity seeking to export from the United States an item designated as a military defense article must receive permission from the U.S. Department of State. In the application, the applicant must attest to the ultimate destination of the item or part. Further, it is a requirement that any individual or entity seeking to export a military item must complete an application in which it is certified to whom the item will ultimately be sent.

As disclosed in court proceedings, for more than two years, PARK was the subject of an investigation being conducted by Special Agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), after he and his Malaysian company, SGS, attempted to purchase military helicopter engines from Helicopter Support International, a company affiliated with Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford, Connecticut. Throughout 2001, PARK and others provided documents to the U.S. Department of State asserting that the engines, worth in excess of \$1,000,000 each, were destined either for the Malaysian Army or the Korean Army. PARK and SGS went so far as to submit sworn end user certificates, with signatures from purported Malaysian and Korean military officials, which attested that the engines were for use by the Malaysian military and the Korean Army. Subsequent investigation by New Haven ICE agents, in the United States and abroad, confirmed that the signatures were fraudulent.

The investigation revealed that two helicopter engines were actually shipped on April 8, 2002, arrived in Malaysia, and then were diverted to China. At that point, ICE agents had not been alerted to the shipment. As the investigation continued, PARK and his associates attempted to obtain four additional engines for the S70 Sikorsky military helicopter. Acting on a suspicion, General Electric, the manufacturer of the engines, notified agents in New Haven. According to statements made in open court today by the prosecutor, PARK attested that the four additional engines were destined for the South Korean Army. Previous investigation by ICE agents had already confirmed that the South Korean Army had never ordered the engines.

Earlier this year, ICE agents were alerted on short notice that PARK intended to enter the United States through San Francisco on March 27, 2004. ICE and DCIS agents tracked his movements and intercepted him on April 1, 2004, at Dulles International Airport when he attempted to depart the United States on a plane bound for Beijing, China. An inspection of PARK's luggage confirmed that he had in his checked bag and on his person a sophisticated night vision goggle system that was manufactured by a San Francisco, California corporation, and is a military item controlled for export. PARK was arrested based on a Complaint prepared and executed in the District of Connecticut. A United States Magistrate Judge in Alexandria, Virginia, ordered Park detained and removed to the District of Connecticut. PARK arrived in Connecticut on May 7, 2004, and has been detained without bond since that date.

"The Arms Control Export Act exists to prevent sensitive American military technology and weapons from ending up in the wrong hands," U.S. Attorney O'Connor stated. "With the assistance of Connecticut defense contractors, this Office and our federal law enforcement partners will be vigilant in investigating and vigorously prosecuting any individual or corporation that violates our nation's export laws."

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Special Agents from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Office of Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John A. Danaher III.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*